



**The Hon Bernie Ripoll MP**  
**Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer**  
**Parliamentary Secretary for Small Business**

Dr Madeleine M Laming  
President  
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16 MAY 2013

Dear Dr Laming

Thank you for your letter of 29 March 2013 to the Deputy Prime Minister concerning the cancellation of the 2013 cycle of the Work, Life and Family Survey (WoLFS). Your letter has been referred to me as I have portfolio responsibility for the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The ABS is an independent statutory authority and the Australian Statistician is responsible for determining the ABS work program. In balancing the ABS's program of collection and other activities, the Statistician seeks to ensure that the ABS's resources are used to the maximum benefit of governments and the broader community. In assessing this, the ABS takes account of the value of the information being sought, the extent to which the ABS undertaking the activity is consistent with its legislated mandate and with community expectations, and the costs that the activity would impose upon the ABS and the broader community.

More information about how the ABS balances its work program can be found in the publication *ABS Forward Work Program, 2012-13 to 2015-16* (cat. no. 1006.0) which is available on the ABS website: [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au).

The ABS is considering options for measuring the other key components of the WoLFS earlier than the scheduled 2019 collection. They are liaising with key stakeholders with regard to their immediate and future information requirements. They are also advising them of other key information sources, including:

- the 2006 and 2011 Census of Population and Housing;
- the 2012 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (results to be published end 2013);
- the Labour Force Survey (monthly);
- the 2011-12 Survey of Income and Housing (results to be published mid 2013); and
- the 2010 Survey of Voluntary Work

I trust this information will be of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

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